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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine if Clark and Trow's (1966) typology of student subcultures could be empirically applied to a description of University of Maryland students. Twelve Counseling Center research staff members faked answers to the 1969 University Student Census (USC), an activities and attitude inventory administered to all undergraduates. The staff members answered the USC twice and faked two roles randomly assigned from the 12 possible permutations of the four student types: academic, collegiate, nonconformist, and vocational. The academic type is highly involved with ideas and highly identifies with the college, faculty, and administration. The collegiate type is not highly involved with ideas but highly identifies with the college. The nonconformist type is highly involved with ideas but does not highly identify with the college, and the vocational type is not highly involved with ideas nor highly identified with the college. Students responding in a particular pattern were identified and were classified as one of the four types if they met certain criteria. The response patterns for the four subcultures were compared with the responses of the 22,544 students who had completed the census. The four types of students differed significantly with regard to their mean grade point averages and tended to differ in their choices of major and college within the university. Based on study findings, each of the four student types are described. A description of Clark and Trow's typology, statistical tables, and references are included. (SW)

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COUNSELING CENTER

Office of Vice President for Student Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

College Park, Maryland

AN EMPIRICAL DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT SUBCULTURES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Neil A. Fiore and William E. Sedlacek

Research Report # 4-70

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Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if Clark and Trow's (1966) typology of student subcultures could be empirically applied to a description of University of Maryland students. Results indicated that: (1) the technique of role-playing can be used to reach an empirical definition of the behavior of subcultural types in answering the University Student Census (USC); (2) students classified as members of the various subcultures, by matching the USC patterns established by the role-players, differed significantly with regard to their mean grade point averages (GPA's); (3) Students classified as members of a given subculture were more likely to be enrolled in certain colleges of the University. Following are the descriptions of each of Clark and Trow's types, based on data from this study.

I - Academic: Had higher expectations of academic achievement and positive feelings toward the faculty and administration. Father was a college graduate and mother had some college. Had high grades and was not likely to be enrolled in the College of Business and Public Administration.

II - Collegiate: Did not aspire to education beyond the bachelors degree and was a member of a fraternity or sorority. Achieved average grades and father had some college. Was not likely to be enrolled in the Arts and Sciences or Engineering colleges.

III - Noncomformist: Dissatisfied with and critical of the University. Vocational aspirations unclear, but earned above average grades. Father had some college. Was likely to be in the Arts and Sciences college and unlikely to be in Engineering.

IV - Vocational: Generally indifferent about courses and University activities. Works from 10-39 hours per week on a part-time job and is concerned about the costs of his education and earns below average grades. Parents have not been to college ;and most likely to be in Business and Public Administration or Engineering Colleges.

Readers were cautioned against stereotyping but were encouraged to use the typology to better understand individual students.

Recently a number of writers have addressed themselves to the topic of student subcultures (Clark and Trow, 1966; Gottlieb and Hodgkins, 1963; Peterson, 1968; and Warren, 1968). While such studies have added to our knowledge, much of the research has not advanced us beyond further descriptions of the categories provided by Clark and Trow.

Factor analyses of student judgments, attitudes, preferences, etc. have resulted in subcultures similar to those hypothesized by Clark and Trow (see Pemberton, 1963; Schumer and Stanfield, 1966). Frantz, (1969) has noted the tautological nature of those studies which have employed descriptive paragraphs of the subcultures to classify students, only to find that students choosing a subculture as self-descriptive are significantly different from students choosing another subculture

Time budgeted interviews have been employed by Bolton and Kammeyer (1967) in order to determine the behavior of students who have been classified into "role orientations." More work of this nature should aid administrators and faculty in operationalizing the Clark and Trow model, thus bringing it out of the realm of descriptive categories and into the realm of empirically defined behaviors from the individual student.

The present study attempts to empirically define the Clark and Trow subcultures at the University of Maryland.

Procedure

The test taking phenomena of "faking" and "response set" (see Anastasi, 1968, pp. 456-460) were employed to arrive at empirical definitions of how Clark and Trow subcultural types would respond to the University Student Census (USC). The USC is an activities and attitude inventory administered to all undergraduates at the University of Maryland. Twelve members of the Counseling Center research staff were administered the 1969 USC twice. Two roles chosen from the 12 possible permutations of Academic, Collegiate, Nonconformist, and Vocational were randomly assigned each subject. The role-playing participants were asked to exaggerate their own characteristics in the direction indicated by the descriptions derived from Clark and Trow's types (see Table 1). If at least five of the six judges (83%) for each role agreed on a response to an item, that response was considered to represent that Clark and Trow type. If sufficient items for each type were generated in this way, specific students who had responded to the USC and who were representative of each type would be identified. The students representing each type would then be compared on grade point average (GPA) and college of enrollment.

Results

Of the 46 items on the USC, the role-players achieved an 83% consensus or better on responses to 13,10,19 and 14 items for the Academic, Collegiate, Nonconformist and Vocational subcultures, respectively.

Relative to all University students, the USC response patterns formulated for the Academic student indicated higher expectations of academic achievement (USC items 16D, expectation of obtaining Doctoral degree, and 21A, absolute certainty of obtaining the bachelor's degree). The Academic student also had the most positive feelings toward the University and its faculty (USC items 31,32,34

and 38 were responded to with agreement that faculty and administrators care about students and that those disrupting the operation of the University should be suspended). Compared to the other types, parents of the Academic student were seen by the role-players as the most highly educated, the father being a college graduate (USC item 28 H) and the mother having had at least some college (USC item 29F,G,H).

The response pattern for the Collegiate student revealed that he did not aspire to education beyond the bachelor's degree (USC item 16B), that he was a member of a fraternity or a sorority (USC item 23E) and that his father has had at least some college training (USC item 28D,E,F).

Compared to other students, the Nonconformist is the most dissatisfied with, and critical of the University (USC items 30A, 31,32,33,36,38,39,41,42 and 44 were responded to with disagreement on statements referring to the existence of staff concern for students, channels for student communications with administrators, and university activities of interest or value). His father had had at least some college training (USC items 28E,G,H) but his own academic and vocational aspirations were unclear (USC items 16B,C,D and 18A,B). Differing from other subcultural types, who were seen as residing either on campus or at home, the Nonconformist resided off-campus in a rented room or shared apartment (USC items 23C,D).

The Vocational student appeared the most isolated. Of the four types, his parents had the least education (USC item 28 A,B,C,G indicated that his father's education ranged from less than a high school diploma to some college, and USC item 29A,B indicated that his mother's education was that of high school or less). He worked between 10-39 hours a week at a part-time job (USC item 24 D,E,F,G), was concerned about the cost of his education (USC item 13A,B), and was the least

involved with the University (USC items 30,40 and 42 were responded to with choices that indicated indifference about courses and university activities).

Since there was some consistency among role-player's judgments of USC items, students responding in a particular pattern were identified. In order to be considered a member of a particular subculture, a student's USC responses were required to match 85% of those on which 100% concensus was reached by the role-players, and 60% of those on which 83% concensus was reached. The response patterns for the four subcultures were compared with the responses of the 22,544 students who completed the USC in the Fall of 1969. A total of 638 students met the criteria with none achieving membership in two subcultures. Although 46 students did meet the 85% matching criterion on a second subcultural response pattern, they did not reach 60% conformity on the second group of 83% concensus responses. With 10 students eliminated because of incomplete data on their majors and grades, the 628 remaining students were distributed as shown in Table 2.

The ranking of GPA's differed from the findings of Gottlieb and Hodgkins (1963) who found that the Nonconformist ranked highest, followed by the Academic, Vocational and Collegiate subcultures. Table 3 reveals that in the present study, the Academic group achieved the highest mean GPA, followed by the Nonconformist, Collegiate and Vocational subcultures. An analysis of variance of the mean cumulative GPA's proved significant beyond the .01 level ($F_{3,624} = 22.94$). The mean GPA of each subculture was then compared with the others by t test, with the differences between any pair of means significant beyond .05. Differences were large and a Type I error was not considered a problem.

Out of the possible 110 majors offered at the University of Maryland, College Park campus, 69 were represented by the students who matched one of the sub-

cultural USC response patterns. Table 4 shows that relative to their representation in the University, students from the College of Education were over-represented in this study and students from Arts and Sciences were under-represented.

A 5x4 chi square testing whether the distribution of subcultural types in each college differed from chance proved significant beyond the .01 level (X^2=97.56) with 12 degrees of freedom (Table 5). Unfortunately, the disparity in the number of students in each college makes a study of the relationship between choice of college and subcultural membership more difficult.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that: (1) the technique of role-playing can be used to reach an empirical definition of the behavior of subcultural types in answering the USC; (2) students classified as members of the various subcultures, by matching the USC response patterns established by the role-players, differed significantly with regard to their mean GPA's; (3) students classified as members of a given subculture were more likely to be enrolled in certain colleges of the University.

The discrepancy between the findings of Gottlieb and Hodgkins (1963) and this study with regard to ranking of GPA's among the subcultures may be partially explained by the different methods of classification employed and the different campuses studied (Gottlieb and Hodgkins used descriptive paragraphs with Michigan State University seniors). In considering the results of the present study it should be noted that no attempt was made to differentiate the students by class and that only six role-players, all from the Counseling Center research staff, were used for each subcultural type. The similarity of the role-players

and the limitations of the USC (i.e., the USC was not created to offer students choices indicative of their degree of identity with a subculture) seem to have contributed to a concentration on one or more salient features of a subcultural type while ignoring others.

The GPA rankings of the Collegiate and Vocational types were also in reverse order of the Gottlieb and Hodgkins findings. It is interesting to note that the Vocational student in this study had parents whose education was less than any of the other types and that he was required to have a part-time job. While these criteria for membership in this subcultural type may have excluded students from higher socio-economic classes who have a pragmatic orientation toward the earning of a college degree, they may have facilitated the selection of purer Vocational types than found in the Gottlieb and Hodgkins study. However, in considering the ranking of GPA's for the Collegiate and Vocational types in this study it should be noted that the Collegiate was required to belong to a fraternity or sorority, who impose their own GPA criteria for membership, and that the Vocational student's grades may be influenced by the number of hours spent on a part-time job.

The results of the chi square of Colleges by subculture indicated that a relationship exists between the student's subcultural orientation and his choice of major and college. Table 5 suggests that students in the colleges of Business and Public Administration (BPA) and Education were primarily from those orientations which do not identify highly with ideas (i.e. 65% of the Education students were either Collegiate or Vocational, and 82% of the BPA students have similar orientations). The Arts & Sciences students were primarily distributed among those subcultures which identified highly with ideas (Academic and Non-conformist). Engineering students revealed a rather practical orientation toward college and a lack of identity with both ideas and the University (i.e.69%) are

revealed a rather practical orientation toward college and a lack of identity with both ideas and the University (i.e. 69% are vocational). Students in the College of Home Economics seemed to identify with the University (i.e. 68% are Academic or Collegiate), but did not identify highly with ideas (i.e. 32% are Academic or Nonconformist). Abe and Holland (1965) found that students choosing certain majors had characteristics associated with the following subcultures:

Major field	Subcultures
Physical Sciences	Academic
Engineering	Vocational
Social Sciences	Nonconformist
Business and Administration	Collegiate
Humanities	Nonconformist

Grouping the Physical Sciences, Social Sciences and the Humanities under the College of Arts and Sciences permits some comparison of the two studies. Clearly, both studies reveal the high degree to which these students identify with ideas. The findings of the present study disagree with the exact subculture into which the Business student fits; however, there is agreement with regard to his location on the low end of the degree of identity with ideas continuum.

Future studies replicating this design might group the subcultural types by sex and class in order to get a more precise description of the students in each orientation. The attitudes and values of the groups might be examined using selected scales from the Omnibus Personality Inventory (see Whittaker, 1969) and the College Student Questionnaire (see Peterson, 1968). The influence

of subcultural membership upon values and student shifts from one subculture to another could be investigated (see Gottlieb and Hodgkins, 1963). Follow-up studies examining the behavior of students labelled as subcultural types, using techniques akin to Bolton and Kammeyer's (1967) time-budgeted interviews, may greatly assist attempts at operational definitions of student subcultures.

The design of the present study might gain from the use of student role-players representative of the several colleges, thus broadening the base of impressions of subcultural types used in the formation USC response patterns. This change combined with the lessening of the stringency of matching requirements may increase the sample size and the diversity of students included in each subculture (e.g. Academic types might not be limited to those who expect to earn a doctoral degree; or the Collegiates would not necessarily belong to a fraternity or sorority).

Another line of research might be continual evaluation of the appropriateness of a typology for describing the students of an institution. Social and educational change may alter the subcultures. Additionally, there is the ethical problem of responding to students as types or as members of subcultures rather than as individuals. If the typing helps faculty and administration to better understand individual students it may be a useful technique, but if it causes over-generalizing and stereotyping it may be a disservice to higher education.

Regardless of the techniques employed, one of the chief purposes of studies involving student subcultures should be the operationalizing of the basic concepts for use by administrators, faculty and counselors. The present study has suggested a technique for describing student orientations at a university using an instrument (the USC) which is given annually to nearly all undergraduates. Though the results of this study require further investigation, they suggest that approximately 61% (35% Vocational and 26% Collegiate) of University of Maryland

students were not highly oriented toward ideas, and that 54% (35% Vocational and 19% Nonconformist) did not identify with the University. These findings have implications for admissions policies, changes in faculty-student relations, curriculum and counseling programs. Information about a university's major orientations should be offered applicants. The discrepancy between the typical freshman's expectations and perceptions of the university can be lessened by defining for applicants the types of students on campus and the programs offered which support their educational objectives. Also the subcultural makeup of a university might be balanced or changed by attempts to attract students with particular orientations toward the total college experience. With the knowledge of the subcultural composition of a university goes the responsibility to improve the responsiveness of changes in curricula and administrative policy to the objectives and expectations implied by those subcultures. The predominance of the Vocational and Collegiate subcultures at the University of Maryland suggests that the university should consider, in the formulation of its policies, the pragmatic, job-oriented, educational goals of the former and the tendency of the latter to expect the opportunity for social interaction from college. Gottlieb and Hodgkins (1963) propose that the attitudes of members of the Vocational and Collegiate subcultures are not greatly influenced by their college experiences. Thus, it would appear that there is a need to involve a large majority of students with the higher aims of the university and to make available to them the opportunities for desirable change through increased contact with faculty, broadening experiences, and ways of relating academic pursuits to their goals.

Table 1.

A Description of Clark and Trow's (1966) Typology

I Academic: Highly involved with ideas and highly identified with your college, faculty and administration.

Your group seriously pursues knowledge to the extent of doing more than the minimum required for passing. A large part of your leisure time is spent in reading books not required for course work and in intellectual discussions with faculty and friends of similar orientation. You are attached to your school as a place of ideas and learning and through the faculty and friends you meet there. Most of your group has aspirations for attending graduate or professional school.

II Collegiate: Not highly involved with ideas but highly identified with your college.

Your group is primarily interested in the social activities available on campus and is generally indifferent to serious academic demands or involvement with ideas beyond the requirements for passing. The students in this subculture are primarily from the middle and upper middle class, most live on or around campus and few work. Football, fraternities and sororities, dates, cars, drinking and campus fun are major pursuits and help to cement a loyal attachment to your college.

III Nonconformist: Highly involved with ideas but not highly identified with your college.

Aggressive nonconformism, critical detachment from the college and its faculty, and a generalized hostility to the college administration distinguishes your group. Ideas and knowledge are important to your group, but your main referent is off-campus society. You pursue a distinctive identity, not as a by-product, but as the aim of your education.

IV Vocational: Not highly involved ideas and not highly identified with your college.

Most of your time is spent among students from lower middle class homes who cannot afford the expensive frivolities that are often associated with college life. Your group is in school primarily for a diploma and the better job which the degree offers. While in school you'll probably work 20-40 hours a week. You hardly have time for fraternities, football games or intellectual bull sessions. Your goals are doing enough to pass the course and get the diploma.

Table 2.

Distribution of Students by Subcultural USC Response Pattern

	Academic	Collegiate	Nonconformist	Vocational	Total
Males	59	60	72	149	340
Females	70	94	43	81	288
Total	129(20%)	154(26%)	115(19%)	230(35%)	628(100%)

Table 3.

Fall, 1969 Mean Cumulative GPA's

	N	Mean Cum. GPA	S.D.
Academic	129	2.75	.77
Collegiate	154	2.34	.69
Nonconformist	115	2.56	.68
Vocational	230	2.13	.77

Table 4.

Percentage Distribution of Students by College

College	Fall, 1968 Enrollment*	Subcultural Samples
Agriculture	2	2
Arts & Sciences	39	29
Bus. & Public Admin.	17	18
Education	20	38
Engineering	9	5
Home Economics	4	4
Other	9	4
	100%	100%

* 1968-69 Annual Report, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Maryland, 1969, p. 76.

Table 5.

Number and Percent of Subcultural Types in Each College *

	Educa.		A & S		BPA		Engnrng.		Home Ec.		Subculure Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic	52	27	49	27	4	4	7	24	5	23	117	20
Collegiate	69	29	31	17	36	32	2	7	10	45	148	25
Noncomformist	31	13	63	35	16	14	0	0	2	9	112	20
Vocational	85	36	39	21	55	50	20	69	5	23	204	35
College Total	237	100%	182	100%	110	100%	29	100%	22	100%	581	100%

* 47 students from Agriculture and miscellaneous colleges were not included due to insufficient N for chi square.

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